THE EVENING TIMES.

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HELP THE BLIND

It should scarcely be necessary to make an appeal to the Senate Committee on Postoffices and Post Roads in behalf of the bill whose purpose it is to promote the circulation of reading matter among the blind. There can be no sane argument against such a measure. It is evident that in the press of legislation the bill in question has been overlooked. And a reminder should res it in its being favorably reported and passed.

Perhaps the greatest affliction known to human kind is that of blindness. Any person who will close his waking eyes for ten minutes only and imagine what it would be to have them closed for a lifetime will begin to appreciate the anguish of the sightless. Lacking the power to see, however, many of the blind in America have been sufficiently ambitious to seek education through their other faculties and have learned to read by touching raised letters with the sensitive tips of the fingers. For obvious reasons it is difficult for many of the sightless to obtain reading matter which is costly in its original form and for which transportation charges are heavy.

Congress can do nothing more generous than to give to the reading matter of the blind the franking privilege which its members enjoy. The bill in question should be rescued from committee and passed at once.

INVESTIGATING AN ANACHRONISM.

In a country that prides itself upon standing in the very front rank of civilization and humaneness mob law and its concomitant, lynching, are anomalous. The student of national character may well be puzzled to account for such symptoms of savagery in a people whose entire life, social and political, is founded upon, and regulated by, obedience to law and maintenance of order. Lynch law is at best a doubtful expedient, even in a community not yet on a basis of statutory law, though it may have served a useful purpose in the days of the early adventurers who carved out States and great communities from the wilderness. But lynch law in our day and generation is a monstrosity, a blot on our title as pioneers in civilization.

Senator Gallinger's resolution for an investigation of lynching in this country would seem to be timely and appropriate. It ought to be undertaken, of course, in a spirit of absolute impartiality and fairness to all sections. Its aim should be not only to discover the causes that lead communities in any part of the country to disregard the fundamental canons of law and order, but to devise, if possible, the means to abrogate the abhorrent practice. If there is anything in the procedure of the courts, either Federal or State, that causes the people to become impatient or distrustful of their efficacy, a remedy should be suggested. Above all, the committee charged with the investigation ought to recognize the fact that in certain communities certain crimes against the individual and against society are regarded with a revulsion of feeling which admits of no penalty short of immediate expiation.

Lynchings are not confined to any one section of our country. They take place with more or less frequency in the West and in the South. They have also occurred elsewhere. They have no place in the grand scheme of American civilization and culture. The men who will apply themselves earnestly and dispassionately to the task of finding the way toward uprooting the practice will be counted among the benefactors of the nation.

IMPERTINENCE TO THE PRESIDENT

It is reported that indignant and more or less insulting letters are frequently received at the White House, by both the President and Mrs. Roosevelt, on the subject of the repairs and refurnishing which now engage their attention. Various citizens of this great American Republic seem to think it is their business to remonstrate personally with the President on his extravagance.

If this is true, it is a fact of which the writers of the letters ought to be exceedingly ashamed. There is no conceivable circumstance which can make it proper to address communications of this sort to Mr. Roosevelt, or to any other man in the country who happens to be refurnishing his house. The fact that the expense is borne by the Government has nothing whatever to do with the case. It would be as sensible for these same people to write insulting letters to every member of Congress because the Senate chamber and the hall of the House of Representatives were recarpeted and newly decorated a little while ago. To extend these impertinences to Mrs. Roosevelt is an act for which there is no adequate phrase in rhetoric. The wife of the President should be at least as carefully respected as the wife of any other citizen, and letters of that kind addressed to the wife of a private individual would justify the husband of the lady in seeking out the writer and giving him a sound thrashing. The mere fact that the President is, by his position, precluded from taking any personal or official notice of such epistles brands the people who write them with the peculiar mark of sneaks.

It may be frankly admitted that the White House needs all of the money now to be spent on it; needs it badly, needed it many years ago, and did not get it simply because of the indolence of Congress and the lack of somebody to take the proper initiative. We have now a Chief Executive with the energy and the taste to make the historic old building what it ought to be, and that is a matter for which to be thankful. President Roosevelt's plans for the renovation of the White House, if properly carried out, will preserve all of its priceless associations, while making it reasonably comfortable for its occupancy of human beings. No President before has had energy to spare for this work, and interest in accomplishing it. President Roosevelt has both. He should also have the support, as doubtless he has, of all the sensible people in the country.

COST OF THE CORONATION

I HAVE just returned from the Lord Chamberlain's office at St. James' Palace, writes a London correspondent of the "Indianapolis News," where I found a blue-blooded official poring over an estimate—in thousands of figures—of the approximate sum of money that is likely to be spent on the coronation during the next six months. He estimates that in gold lace, minivet velvet, blunt court swords, silk court stockings, artificial calves, coronation coaches, red sealing wax, and so on, nearly $1,250,000 will be spent.

He puts down for houses and windows to view the procession, coronation parties in the West End, and entertainments by the government of princes, chiefs and envoys of all shades of black, brown, white, red, and yellow, at West End hotels and private houses (graduated in luxury largely according to color of guest), the sum of $4,500,000; traveling expenses of sightseers from Europe, $100,000; from America, $175,000; traveling expenses of nabobs and others, with their motley retinues from everywhere, $2,250,000; cost of the short journey to Westminster Abbey (officials, police, soldiers and the rest), $75,000; cost of long procession all around London, $175,000; cost of state banquets, balls and garden parties at Buckingham Palace, $250,000; entertainment at Windsor Castle and upkeep of 1,000 Indian soldiers in camp for several weeks, $300,000; coronation parties on the Thames and at the big houses near London Saturdays and Mondays, $250,000.

He calculates that there will be spent at Hyde Park fair $750,000; banquets of learning and other societies to foreign, colonial and other guests all over the British Isles, $2,750,000; coronation tours to manufacturing and other centers, $2,500,000; popular fetes and fireworks, charity feasts and decorations, $1,500,000. He puts down half a million sovereigns under miscellaneous headings, and makes the total $19,025,000.

JEWISH CHARITIES IN AMERICA AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

By Hon. SIMON WOLF.

THE National Conference of Jewish Charities takes place this week in Detroit. Its meeting is so timed as to enjoy the benefit of the National Conference of Charities and Correction, which also meets in Detroit. Men of eminent ability and experience, who have made the subject of charity and philanthropy a life study, will be present at this Jewish conference. Papers by men of the highest intelligence will be read, and will, no doubt, be interesting and instructive.

Co-ordinate with the subject of disposing of charity to the deserving is the great problem that has been thrust upon the American citizens of Jewish faith in regard to immigration. People of Jewish faith are landing in large numbers. Independent of the natural inflow, there are vast numbers who seek refuge here from the persecutions of other countries, and how to care for, distribute, assimilate, educate, uplift, and to divert them into the channels of industry and manual labor, is a problem of the greatest magnitude, and it calls for unselfish devotion, high order of statesmanship, and the sincerest love of country. Thus the Jewish charities have with zeal and energy and rare intelligence taken hold of this all-important question, not only as Jews, but principally as citizens of the United States, whose first wish is to impose no burdens upon the nation, State, or city, and to assume all responsibility and care for the refugees and the deserving poor. Great good has been accomplished in this direction, order and system have been infused. Men and women of our faith have vied with each other to produce the most favorable and satisfactory results.

The immigrants have been distributed, taking them from the congested seaboard cities, and no one but those cognizant of the facts can estimate what the United Hebrew Charities of the United States has accomplished and stands ready to continue doing along the same noble and disinterested line of work.

The Hebrew Charities of this city will be, among others, represented by Mr. I. L. Blout, the president of the United Hebrew Charities of Washington, and while the number of our suffering poor is limited, yet I am sure that there will be no one at that conference more competent or experienced, and who has given more unselfish devotion to the work than Mr. Blout. The Hebrew Charities of Washington is thoroughly systematized and organized, and cares for the comfort of not only suffering poor Jews, but in a large measure, non-Jews. Jews who have been stranded here have been aided in transportation, and provided with means to reach their destination, and there is a constant watchfulness to prevent any suffering among our people, and to prevent pauperism. The question of Orthodox, Reform, or Agnostic Judaism is never allowed to play a part in our recognition of the needs of the individual poor. Our charity is broad, liberal, cosmopolitan, human, and humane. Sectarianism finds no lodgment in our desire to improve and better the condition of our fellow-men. This is the spirit that has animated the Jews from time immemorial, and is the foundation stone of the Hebrew charities of this city.

THE HOME DRUDGE

FOR THE housewife there is no middle path; she must either lead or follow. The household drudge, no matter how much she deserves it, seldom commands much respect, says the "Sunny South." Many times one lets what one believes to be one's poverty chain one to old grooves and time-worn ruts, when it isn't proverty at all, but a tame submission to circumstances.

If a woman possesses tact, self-respect, and a certain amount of executive ability, she will make her individuality felt in her home. She will pay as much attention to pots and pans as pots and pans deserve, but she will show very plainly that while she is competent to boil the pots and arrange palatable menus, she is capable of other things as well. She will not let her culinary ability overshadow her social and literary talents. She will realize the fact that the members of her family have souls and minds, as well as bodies and appetites. She will also comprehend that if the soul is dwarfed and the mind stunted, the body will become clogged with earthiness and the appetite partake somewhat of the beast. The progressive, practical housewife will never sink into a dull drudge. Some women believe that their whole duty is to husband, home, and children. These are lamentably narrow. A woman's duties are manifold. Home is first to be considered, but there are duties outside of home. We all owe a big debt to God and His church and His Sunday schools, etc. We owe a debt to our fellow-men and to the world at large. We should keep informed on matters pertaining to the welfare of our country. A woman is a citizen, even if she cannot vote. She shouldn't be a mere automaton, accepting her husband's views on all subjects, legal, political, and national. She should read and study and judge for herself.

When a woman so far forgets her duty to herself as to neglect her appearance and her mind, she must look for lessened respect from her husband and children. I called on a family who had lately come into our neighborhood. A very shabby, slatternly woman came to the door. There were traces of snuff about her mouth and of pots and kettles about her hands. She bowed and asked me into the parlor. Presently the two girls of the household came in—no snuff about their mouths, no traces of pots and kettles about their hands; well-dressed, stylish, pretty, well-informed, entertaining. I enjoyed their society. The shabby woman passed the door. I glanced at her and asked: "Who is she?"

The eldest girl flushed and answered, after a moment's hesitation:

"She is the woman who works for us."

I found out afterward that she was their mother. But the girl told just the truth.

Whose fault was it that the mother was only "the woman who works for us;" that the daughters were ashamed to own her as their mother? Some women will say: "It was the daughters' fault; they, doubtless, were idle and heartless, and let the mother do all the drudgery." Well, suppose they did. I still ask whose the fault? The fault from the very beginning rested in the mother. She had trained those girls, and if they were badly trained, idle, selfish, she was to blame. She should have kept herself above drudgery, mastered her house work and children, controlled her girls and her work, not tamely and weakly permitted work and children to control her. She was wanting something in firmness and self-respect. I admit the girls made a far better impression on me than did "the woman who worked for them."

The mother who slaves and drudges and wears her life away while her girls play the role of parlor boarders is more to be condemned than pitied; I pity the girls who have such a weak-minded mother, and I respect them for having made something of themselves in spite of it.

If the finances of the family require that the home work shall be done by its members, then the mother should so manage that each one of the household does his or her part, and does it well. When you hear a mother say to a daughter: "I had rather do the work myself than be bothered with you," you may be sure her character lacks two great essentials—patience and firmness.

The mother should be queen of home, not the slave and drudge. She should buy up-to-date, interesting games, subscribe for instructive magazines, procure good books, read them with her children and plan occasional entertainments.

She should play games with her children, sing with them, enter into all their pursuits and pleasures, teach them to be honorable, careful, refined, moral, and self-reliant; also teach them to work. She should have a duty for everyone, and allow no parlor boarders.

The Spaces of the Years.

Back through the spaces of the mirrored years
We gaze through eyes misty with unshed tears,
And see ourselves as we appeared in youth,
Ere what we then called truth had grown untruth.
What courage and what hope, and what desire;
What zeal that set our very souls on fire;
What faith in man, in our own selves, in God,
What depths we sounded, and what heights we trod.

Now, from the cool shades of the Zone of Calms,
Where nature drops upon us healing balms,
We gaze back at the tempest and the flood,
And wonder at the quiet of our blood.

What have we lost? Alas, we have lost all.
Joy, hope, illusion, faith—the roll why call?
What have we gained? The great years grow serene,
Unthrilled, yet patient, waiting the last scene.

Wide are the spaces of the vanished years,
A brief mirage the gleam of youth appears—
And then the softening tints of elder days,
At last—the end seen through a shimmering haze.

—Boston Transcript.

BURMA'S RUBY MINES.

Alluvial deposits are the ruby-bearing strata, and it is chiefly in the sand or gravel, seldom in their original matrix (crystalline limestone), that the rubies are found. The ruby gravel is washed down by the water from some place higher up the river, and depositd in pockets along the Mogok Valley. It is in these alluvial deposits that the Twinion system of mining is employed, shafts being sunk to the ruby-bearing strata, which lie from fifteen to twenty-two feet below the top clay. When worked out these shafts are filled in again. On reaching the byon, the local name of the ruby earth, it is dug up, loaded on small trucks, and dragged up an inclined tram to the washing machines. Here it is passed through sieves of different sizes under jets of water, the smaller stuff being carried on into rotary pans in which the heavier particles, including all stones of value, lie at the outer edge. After the clay and sand are eliminated the remaining portion is found to be made up of quartz, gneiss, pegmatite, or whit felspathic granite, black tourmaline, garnet, rock crystal, spinel, and the real ruby.

Besides the pigeon-blood color ruby, the red corundum, the most valuable gem in the European market, and other varieties of the corundum also occur, but only in very small quantities. These are the blue corundum, or sapphire, of every depth of tint; the yellow, or oriental, topaz, and the purple amethyst, the green variety (emerald) being extremely rare.—Cornhill Magazine.

AGGRAVATING INDIFFERENCE

A Chicago paper warns the people of that city against milk which is practically poisoned, so far as its fitness for the food of children is concerned. It states that the unscrupulous milk vender deliberately serves to the poorer districts of the city a quality of milk which is not only inferior to that sold to the rich, but is so adulterated as actually to increase infant mortality; and that the officials whose business it is to prevent this sort of thing pay less attention to the less fortunate parts of the city than to the streets where the rich reside. If this information is correct it indicates a state of things which is truly diabolical. Herod has gone down in history as a monster of cruelty because he gave orders to kill the first-born children of his laboring population on one particular occasion, in order to prevent, as he thought, the overthrow of his own power. These modern Herods sacrifice the lives of children of all ages, every summer, without even the excuse of the ancient monarch, that it is done in self-preservation.

The horrible part of this story is the indifference with which the community in general regards it. Adulteration of all kinds of food, unwholesome milk, unwholsome water, and unsanitary dwellings, are so much a matter of course with us, especially in the districts where the laboring people live, that a recital of their consequences does not even stir a ripple of excitement.

The supervision of the milk supply of a big city is one of the most necessary and least considered things in the world. Milk which is unwholesome affects children directly, and everybody else indirectly, since this liquid enters into the composition of half the things which we eat. Perhaps, at some future time, reading of the indifference with which we regard this matter, posterity will vote us barbarians.

KAISER NEVER CROWNED.

Probably few people out of England regard with more interest the proceedings in regard to the King's coronation than his imperial nephew at Berlin, and all the more so that, as Emperor, he is still uncrowned, as were his father and grandfather before him. The reason why is something of a mystery, states the "Paris Messenger," but the explanation most generally accepted is that the original imperial crown of the Emperor of Germany is in the hands of Austria, and that she shows no disposition to allow it to leave Vienna. Bourrienne records that Napoleon said on one occasion: "I have not succeeded Louis XIV, but Charlemagne," and adds that in 1804, shortly before he was crowned, he had the imperial insignia of that monarch brought from the old Frankish capital and exhibited in Paris with those made for his own coronation. But Mr. Bryce, in his "Holy Roman Empire," writes that if this is not a trick of Napoleon Bourrienne was in error, as the regalia of Charlemagne had been removed from Aix-la-Chapelle by Austria in 1798.

The coronation of a German emperor would be an event of such prodigious historic interest as to throw all other coronations into the shade. Perhaps there are those living who may yet witness it.

A PLEA FOR FREE POSTAGE ON BOOKS FOR THE BLIND

By H. H. JOHNSON, of Romney, West Virginia.

THE bill to promote the circulation of reading matter among the blind is still in the hands of the Senate Committee on Postoffices and Post Roads, awaiting the kindly touch that will bring it back to the Senate with favorable recommendation.

An act of Congress, entitled "An act to promote the education of the blind," approved February 27, 1879, sets apart the sum of $250,000 to be permanently invested in securities of the United States, the proceeds of which shall be forever applied, through the American Printing House for the Blind at Louisville, Ky., to the making of books and apparatus used in the education of the blind, to be annually distributed to the schools for the blind in the several States in the proportion of the attendance of pupils. For almost a quarter of a century this magnificent but just benefaction has been available for the youthful blind of the country in the schools; and the books in embossed characters have multiplied amazingly.

The pupils retire from the schools to bookless homes. Some of the more fortunate ones have gained one, or possibly two books at school as prizes. The securing of more is barred by the prices at which the books have to be sold on account of the expensive processes used in their production, and the small editions that are required to supply the demand.

Worcester's small pocket dictionary of some eighteen thousand words makes three large volumes and is quoted at $14. It is entirely safe to put the cost at from ten to twenty times that at which like books in the ink editions are sold. The size of these books is also against their accumulation, for few houses could spare the room that any considerable number of them would occupy. The eleven volumes of the Bible in the New York point fill a box more than three feet long, fourteen inches wide, and thirteen deep. Fortunately, their weight does not keep pace with their size.

The blind in the very great majority of cases are poor beyond the possibility of paying transportation charges on books that might be borrowed.

Is the Government's benefaction complete? We are not asking for action of questionable propriety that the Government may show itself sentimentally kind or romantically generous. Is there not a measure of justice in it? Free text books for the children in the common schools, with circulating free libraries at their very doors and a market in which for their mature years, the price of a good cigar will buy almost any, even the best books, are advantages so common as no longer to attract notice or comment. How different with the blind, relegated to their native darkness when their school days are past, without a ray of light to follow them and light their ways, and the necessity of forgetting all the past to make life tolerable! It is difficult to imagine a privation so absolute.

These matters are not referred to with any desire of arousing a feeble thrill of sickly sentimentality or a sudden spasm of morbid benevolence. Is there not a propriety in trying to remedy a condition so serious? Would it not be just and righteous to clothe the schools for the blind with this incidental power of continuing the education of their pupils through their whole lives in the interest of a better citizenship for them, to say nothing of greater happiness they would enjoy?

There is other legislation in the interest of the blind, in contemplation, looking to their higher education. I cannot feel that this measure, however meritorious in many respects, ought to divert attention from the bill for the free postage on books. The latter will bless every blind reader in the country, and ultimately, in the world. Canada has a like law, and it will spread among the nations; and postal agreements may some day give to each the benefits of all in the matter of books for the blind. The other measure can be postponed without injury to anyone; for the blind who want the higher learning will get it with or without assistance, while the impecunious blind cannot get books without aid.

WOMEN AND THEIR WORK

THERE is not so much active complaint on the part of outraged and despairing housekeepers over the general faithlessness and general unsatisfactoriness of maids of all work as prevailed at one time. A certain apathy has succeeded to the outburst of distress, but the real state of affairs is no better. There is the same need of maids; the same hopelessness of getting them. Meantime all sorts of experiments are being made.

At Williamsport, Pa., a domestic training school has been in active operation for the last seven years. In 1895 a club of eight women, with $200 as funds, and subscriptions that were given them, rented a house, engaged a matron and a cook, furnished the house with gifts of carpets, utensils, necessary furniture of all kinds, and secured eight girls, the children of poor and helpless parents, and received written agreements from the parents that they would not interfere with the girls or their training. This industrial club taught the girls kitchen work, cooking, marketing, and serving, taking turns also in teaching sewing, mending, the care of household linen, and other common and necessary tasks. For five years the club clothed the girls, then they applied to the State board of charities, and gained an appropriation of $1,500 a year, to run the school; they received $500 from their friends, and with this sum made their first payment on a house, which is now their own. It is prettily furnished so that the girls have an attractive home, and it accommodates between forty and fifty girls. The kitchen is in charge of a competent woman who has for helpers a class of the older girls, and as the younger ones come on, the older ones are found situations in domestic service among people who are only too happy to take them. This sounds too good to be true, and Williamsport will soon become a Mecca to housekeepers, who will, it appears, find there what they have sought in vain elsewhere.

These equally fortunate girls may enter this training school any time between the ages of seven and fifteen; they attend public school until twelve years of age, go to church and Sunday school, and receive a thorough training in the school. The school, which has proved itself a valuable aid in many ways, is now run on an annual allowance from the Legislature, a certain sum from the city poor board, annual contributions from the women interested in the school, and from citizens of the city, eked out by an annual supper and donation day in November. The girls supply bread to many customers. Once a week the committee meet, take luncheon at the school, and spend the day sewing for the younger girls and for the school.

Some housekeepers are anxiously regarding the experiment now being made in Sioux City, Iowa, where co-operative housekeeping on a small scale is going on successfully. Five families, comprising fifteen persons, have joined themselves together for this enterprise, and it costs each person an average of $2.31 a week for board. Having organized, the association rented a commodious two-story house properly located to serve the circle. Every Friday the women in this circle meet and make out the menus for the coming week. Members are allowed to introduce favorite dishes, and if they wish cook them in the kitchen their own way. One of the women and her husband do the marketing, and all bills are paid by the treasurer. The different families are people of moderate means, and have each kept one servant. Now they employ one housekeeper, who cooks, keeps kitchen, dining room, and closets in order, is paid $5 a week, and is given hers and her little boy's board. These co-operators agree that their household expenses have been reduced, and there is no more trouble with a servant. Another point gained is that there is no worry in providing meals for guests; they simply go over to the dining room with their hosts, who pay for them at the rate of 15 cents a meal. The plan has succeeded so well that other circles are forming, and the originators of the plan are besieged by letters asking for details.

This seems like an ideal arrangement and a reasonable one, and if no serpent enters this Eden there should be concord and amity, but the foreboding mind sees possibility of dissension. Among fifteen persons there must be at least one crotchety; in the bills of fare given for a week in the account of this experiment there is one meal where fried liver is the piece de resistance. Now to some the sight and smell of liver is abhorrent, and if that one should be ill-tempered when it appears on the board, and should give vent to his or her objections, it might be most painful to all and break up the concord that had previously reigned. Too much salt in the broth has parted friends before now; think of Bedreddin and the tarts without pepper, and other mournful instances of like sort. Then there is the question of onions, a fertile theme for discussion. However, it is to be hoped that the original fifteen of the Parkside Co-operative Housekeeping Association have the same tastes. In such a combination any possible trouble would start with the men; the women would think of the servant question and swallow all objections.—Springfield Republican.

INSECTS THAT FEED ON RARE AND PRICELESS DOCUMENTS

THE insect that makes tiny holes in old furniture is known as the anobium. The anobium is an epicure, for he prefers rare and antique objets d'art.

He is properly a beetle, and not a worm. He is a most minute creature, and can only be seen under the microscope. It was found that anobium has an intense dislike for starch, whereupon it was suggested that, instead of the paste commonly used in the binding of books, starch should be employed exclusively.

No sooner was this discovery made than it was found that, although anobium hated starch, another small insect, lepisma, and equally deadly to bookcovers, reveled in that substance.

So there is still some substance to be found that both anobium and lepisma detest in common.

Some time ago the account books and confidential papers of a large London firm that were always kept locked in a most expensive and elaborate safe, were all found to have been sadly ravaged by lepisma, which had defied the massive walls of the safe, and had eaten away a considerable part of the books. Indeed, these tiny pests had, in one or two cases, made erasures that cost the firm in question a great deal of difficulty to make good again.

Yet the bookworm has a foe that is as tiny and ferocious as itself. This creature has a long Latin name which is translated as book scorpion, is armed with a pair of mandibles, and attacks the bookworm with immense fury. The microscopic battle always ends in favor of the scorpion.—New York Journal.